

What is claimed is:

1. A hog farrowing system for use in cold environments, the farrowing system comprising:

a farrowing building providing protection from weather elements;

5 a plurality of farrowing boxes within the farrowing building having an entrance to permit free ingress and egress of female hogs and restrain piglets;

an alley outside the farrowing boxes for the female hogs to defecate, urinate, and move; feed and water stations outside the farrowing boxes.

10 2. The farrowing system of claim 1 wherein the farrowing building is not heated.

3. The farrowing system of claim 2 wherein the farrowing building is not insulated.

4. The farrowing system of claim 1 wherein the farrowing building is a hoop barn.

15

5. The farrowing system of claim 1 wherein the farrowing building is a pole barn.

6. The farrowing system of claim 1 wherein the farrowing boxes are insulated.

20 7. The farrowing system of claim 6 wherein the farrowing boxes further comprises a heat system.

8. The farrowing system of claim 7 wherein the heat system is for each of the farrowing boxes and comprises two 250W heat lamps.

25

9. The farrowing system of claim 7 wherein heat from the heat system is located opposite the entrance to permit the female hog to lay facing the entrance and give birth to the piglets near the heat.

10. The farrowing system of claim 1 wherein the farrowing boxes have a removeable door to permit free ingress and egress of piglets to defecate, urinate, and move to the feed and water stations.

5 11. The farrowing system of claim 10 wherein the farrowing boxes have a roller located over the removeable door to prevent bruising on the female hogs large pre-farrowing underline and udder.

12. The farrowing system of claim 1 further comprising limestone bedding under the
10 farrowing boxes.

13. The farrowing system of claim 12 wherein the farrowing boxes have an open bottom and are placed directly upon the limestone bedding.

15 14. The farrowing system of claim 13 wherein straw bedding is placed within the farrowing boxes to permit the female hog to build a nest within a center location of the farrowing box.

15. The farrowing system of claim 14 wherein the farrowing box further comprises
20 anti-crushing boards and a creep area placed away from the nest to prevent the female hog from crushing the piglets.

16. The farrowing system of claim 15 wherein the farrowing box provides
25 approximately 42 square feet per female hog and her piglets.

17. The farrowing system of claim 1 further comprising limestone spread in the alley as a disinfectant and barrier to pathogens in the floor.

18. The farrowing system of claim 17 wherein the alley is approximately 6 feet wide.
30

19. The farrowing system of claim 17 further comprising a ring to be placed in the female hog's snout to prevent rooting in the alley.

20. The farrowing system of claim 1 wherein the feed and water stations are in a
5 common location in the farrowing building.

21. The farrowing system of claim 20 wherein the feed and water stations are in a farrowing building location approximately 12 feet wide.

10 22. A hog farrowing box for use within a farrowing building in cold environments, the farrowing box comprising:
a front, back and sides attached together defining an inner chamber, open top and a bottom;
a heat system within the inner chamber;
the front having an entrance to permit free ingress and egress of a female hog and restrain
15 piglets;
bedding on the bottom permitting the female hogs to nest;
insulation covering the open top.

23. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein the heat system comprises two heat lamps.

20

24. The farrowing box of claim 23 wherein each heat lamp is approximately 250W.

25. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein heat from the heat system is located opposite the entrance to permit the female hog to lay facing the opening and give birth to
25 the piglets near the heat.

26. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein the entrance has a removeable door to permit free ingress and egress of piglets to defecate, urinate, and move to the feed and water stations after the piglets are approximately 14 days old.

30

27. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein the entrance has a roller positioned to prevent bruising on the female hog's large pre-farrowing underline and udder.

28. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein the bedding is hog rootable limestone.

5

29. The farrowing box of claim 28 wherein the limestone is shell and bone builder dry limestone adapted to insulate the female hog and piglets from a cold floor and keep the inner chamber dry.

10 30. The farrowing box of claim 29 wherein the shell and bone builder dry limestone is an approximately 4 inch layer.

31. The farrowing box of claim 29 wherein the bedding is agricultural lime adapted to act as a disinfectant and barrier to pathogens in the floor.

15

32. The farrowing box of claim 31 wherein the agricultural lime is Ag Lime #3.

33. The farrowing box of claim 31 wherein the agricultural lime is an approximately 1/2 inch layer.

20

34. The farrowing box of claim 33 wherein the agricultural lime is placed under a 4 inch layer of shell and bone builder dry limestone.

25 35. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein the bedding is stem straw placed within the inner chamber to permit the female hogs to build a nest within a center location of the farrowing box.

36. The farrowing box of claim 35 wherein the stem straw is placed over hog rootable limestone.

30

37. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein the farrowing box further comprises anti-crushing boards and a creep area placed away from the nest in the center location to prevent the female hog from crushing the piglets.

38. The farrowing box of claim 37 wherein the farrowing box provides approximately 42 square feet per female hog and piglets.

39. The farrowing box of claim 22 further comprising rods extending from each side of the entrance to the back, the rods placed close enough to the bottom to permit the female hog to straddle the rods and turn around, the rods positioned to prevent two female hogs from lying within the inner chamber together.

40. The farrowing box of claim 32 wherein the rods are moveable between a nesting position and a nursing position.

41. The farrowing box of claim 22 wherein the insulation is a styrofoam panel heat loss barrier.

42. The farrowing box of claim 41 further comprising a clear plastic vapor barrier.

43. The farrowing box of claim 42 wherein the vapor barrier is approximately 6 mil plastic.

44. The farrowing box of claim 22 further comprising an insulative gate covering the entrance.

45. The farrowing box of claim 44 wherein the insulative gate is carpeting.

46. The farrowing box of claim 44 wherein the insulative gate has overlapping plastic sections.

47. The farrowing box of claim 22 further comprising a center brace adapted to be gripped by a front end loader and lifted.

48. A method of farrowing hogs in cold environments within a building utilizing a plurality of heated and insulated farrowing boxes which permit unrestricted female hog movement and promote natural mothering instincts by the female hog, the method comprising:

providing a pregnant female hog for each of the farrowing boxes approximately 24 hours before the female hog gives birth to piglets;

10 providing an alley outside the farrowing box for the female hog to defecate, urinate, and move;

providing a feed and water stations outside the farrowing boxes.

promoting the female hog to root in bedding provided inside the farrowing box and build a centrally located nest in the farrowing box as opposed to an alley of the building;

15 promoting the female hog to give birth to piglets close to a heat source;

protecting the piglets from crushing by use of a creep area, anti-crush boards, and anti-crush rods.

49. The method of claim 48 further comprising the step permitting unrestricted piglet

20 movement after approximately fourteen days such that the mothering female hog may teach the piglets to defecate, urinate, eat, and drink outside the farrowing box.

50. The method of claim 49 further comprising the step weaning the piglets at approximately six weeks by removing the female hogs.

25

51. The method of claim 50 further comprising the step removing the piglets from the building at approximately eight weeks.

52. The method of claim 51 wherein the piglets are between 50-55 lbs in weight and can be marketed as feeder pigs.

30

53. The method of claim 51 further comprising the step removing the nesting boxes, the nesting boxes having an open bottom permitting the bedding to remain in the building.

54. The method of claim 53 wherein the step removing the farrowing boxes is performed with a front end loader tractor.

55. The method of claim 54 further comprising the step cleaning the building of the bedding.

56. The method of claim 56 further comprising spreading limestone bedding over the building floor and replacing the farrowing boxes.

57. The method of claim 48 further comprising utilizing a once-bred gilt system to permit bringing the female hog to market as a market hog.

58. The method of claim 48 wherein the heat source maintains a minimum 70°F temperature in the creep area and a minimum 50°F in the centrally located nest.

59. The method of claim 48 further comprising the step modifying the farrowing box for warm environments by reducing the heat and insulation.

60. A hog farrowing box comprising:
a front, back and sides attached together defining an inner nesting chamber;
rods extending from the front to the back, the rods placed close enough to the bottom to permit the female hog to straddle the rods and turn around, the rods positioned to prevent two female hogs from lying within the inner chamber together.

61. The hog farrowing box of claim 60 further comprising an entrance on the front to permit free ingress and egress of a female hog and restrain piglets.

62. The hog farrowing box of claim 61 further comprising a door at the entrance that can be removed to permit free ingress and egress of the piglets.

63. The hog farrowing box of claim 61 further comprising a roller positioned at the
5 entrance to prevent bruising on the female hog's large pre-farrowing underline and udder.

64. The farrowing box of claim 60 wherein the rods are moveable between a nesting position where the rods are positioned wide to not obstruct the female hog from preparing a nest and a nursing position to prevent two female hogs from lying within the inner chamber
10 together.

65. A hog farrowing box comprising:
a front, back and sides attached together defining an inner nesting chamber;
an entrance on the front to permit free ingress and egress of a female hog and restrain
15 piglets;
a roller positioned at the entrance to prevent bruising on the female hog's large pre-farrowing underline and udder.

66. The hog farrowing box of claim 65 further comprising a door at the entrance that can
20 be removed to permit free ingress and egress of the piglets.

67. The hog farrowing box of claim 65 further comprising rods extending from the front to the back, the rods placed close enough to the bottom to permit the female hog to straddle the rods and turn around, the rods positioned to prevent two female hogs from lying within
25 the inner chamber together.

68. The hog farrowing box of claim 67 wherein the rods are moveable between a nesting position where the rods are positioned wide to not obstruct the female hog from preparing a nest and a nursing position to prevent two female hogs from lying within the inner chamber
30 together.